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THE

TRUE HISTORY

OF

ALEXANDER, JOHN, AND PATRICK,

AND OF THE GREAT

MERCANTILE & MANUFACTURING CONCERN

CARRIED ON BY THEM,

UNDER THE FIRM OF

"JOHN, ALEXANDER, & CO."

From an old M.S. in the Museum of the Sydney University, Australia.

BY THE PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT HISTORY

IN THE COLLEGE OF SAINT MUNGO.

DEDICATED (WITHOUT PERMISSION) TO THE RECTOR AND SENATUS ACADEMICUS OF SAID UNIVERSITY.

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THE TRUE HISTORY

OF

ALEXANDER, JOHN, AND PATRICK.

ONCE upon a time (the manuscript adheres very much to this old-fashioned phraseology)—once upon a time, their dwelt, in a parish situated on the western coast of that district of country, supposed to have taken its name from one of that libertine Jupiter's mistresses,* three personages who were rather remarkable in their day and generation.

The first of these (in respect he is properly our hero) was *Alexander M'Alpine*, so called on account of the old name of part of his estate. He claimed to be of a very ancient family—pretending to trace his descent direct from our first parents. Of this he was not a little proud. His friends and admirers fancied it induced a sort of nobleness of character—a combination of gravity and enthusiasm, calculated to elevate him above low ideas, and mean actions. Others, however, were very much disposed to laugh at all such pretences, and (Alexander not having been originally very well left, in respect of cash or property) to indulge in ill-natured remarks about "pride and poverty." Amongst his neighbours he was familiarly styled SANDY, being a diminutive of the more formal name Alexander; and sometime he was even called, by way of derision, S-A-W-N-Y. But, it must be confessed, this latter name was only used behind his back, or by such as were beyond his reach at the time.

Sandy (as we shall generally call him ourselves) was said to be singularly addicted to an old practice of filling his nasal organ with ground tobacco, vulgarly called "snuff." Some members of his family were fond of a particular kind of dress, *said* to have been derived from the Egyptians, or Greeks, or Romans! and in consequence of these two peculiarities, he himself was generally, and in a jocular way, represented as dressed in the pecular style referred to, with a snuff-box in his hand, taking a pinch, or offering

* Supposed *Europa*. Strange how often these ladies, no better than they should be, gave names to places, and founded what were called noble families, in the old world.—*Editor*.

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one to a friend. The best specimens of these representations are still to be seen in front of tobacconists' shops—which is the real explanation of an emblem, whereof few people, in this quarter of the world, understand the origin. As already said, Sandy was very proud—and yet he might also be termed mean, in respect of his frequent subserviency to men of rank. He was reported to be more than usually cautious (or in the old language of the district "canny") and yet he was so hot and fiery that his *perfervidum ingenium* was quite a proverb; and, in fact, all his great misfortunes had been caused by rashness—for example, his loss by the great "Dunbar failure," while his affairs were under the management of Johnie Baliol; or the shipwreck of the "Flodden," Captain Jameson, through mere recklessness. He was also reputed to be uncommonly fond of home, and yet he was the greatest wanderer on the face of the earth; for, go where you would, you were sure to meet Sandy, or some of his famly. But, with all these seeming paradoxes, he possessed no small share of energy: he had been well educated, always a great matter; and, by hook or crook, he contrived generally to be at the head of the table. Such was Alexander, son of Alpine—at least during the early part of his life.

The second personage of our trio was JOHN BROWN—more generally known as JOHN BULL, from a sort of bull-headed straight-forwardness that was supposed to characterise his conduct. This John was a portly, well-favoured gentleman, remarkably well pleased with himself and all belonging to him. He was very partial to good living, so that his neighbours (and especially Sandy) sometimes joked him upon the subject—indeed Sandy, when they were youngsters, used to have a slang way of coupling John's name with "pudding;" and another neighbour, *Jean Crapeau*, invariably gave him the surname of "Roast-beef," or "Beef-steak." In pictures, even those made by his own children, he was universally represented as a stout, well fed, well-dressed person, with a round, and not very intellectual, cast of countenance. Specimens of such drawings, are to be seen, in the pages of an ancient Periodical named PUNCH, some copies of which are preserved in our Metropolitan Museum, and are very interesting, as showing the sort of things that amused the vulgur of those times. Moreover, John was of a somewhat choleric, but withal a placable temperament. His greatest fault, or weakness, was a deep-rooted notion of his own undoubted and unquestionable superiority to all mankind whomsoever, by which he was often led to draw erroneous conclusions, and, it must be confessed, make himself not a little ridiculous at times. But being a diligent and shrewd man of business, ingenious, and of a plodding persevering spirit, he was sure to thrive if any one did. Such was John Bull.

The remaining personage was PATRICK O'SHAUGHNESSY—perhaps the most remarkable, in his way, of the three. He too, like Sandy, claimed to be come of very ancient descent. In fact Sandy's

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family were mere mushrooms compared to Patrick's! Like John and Sandy, he had also his familiar names—sometimes *Pat*, and frequently *Paddy*. He possessed the elements of a fine character, injured by circumstances. Warm-hearted; implusive; full of genuis; brave and affectionate; his unfortunate position had been such as to render his follies and poverty a by-word amongst the neighbours, and even with strangers. He had a singular facility of saying absurd things, which—why does not appear—were called "bulls;" and hence the term, imported into our language for a witty paradox. But, above all, he possessed a remarkable smoothness of tongue, which has been always since styled "blarney." Pat, too, had his delineators, and was generally represented, by artists, as a thoughtless-looking rag-a-muffin, out at the knees and elbows, with a roofless or brimless hat, a cudgel (known as a "shilleleagh") in his hand, and a pipe in his mouth, idling away his time, or engaged in a brawl or a dance. Poor Pat, thine was, in very truth, a sad story! But we must not get sentimental, in the course of this matter-of-fact history.

Now, it so happened that each of these personages had inherited an estate—all three quite "convanient," as Pat would have said; but "mighty inconvanient," as it sometimes happened.

John's property was large and fertile; and the tenants upon it had always prided themselves on their good living. Patrick's again, though not quite so large, was equally fertile: it was very favourably situated, too, surrounded by water, and so beautiful that it was styled, by poets, "The Emerald Isle," and by orators, the "First Gem of the Sea." Sandy, on the other hand, had been left by his ancestors, so many acres of mountains, covered with heather, so many of barren moor, covered with a plant named the *thistle*—supposed to be very emblematic of his own character—and a remnant only from which crops might be reared. John's property was fairly cultivated, and very much ornamented. Sandy's was admittedly very romantic and beautiful, and, where this was possible, quite a model of farming and improvement; while Patrick's remained almost in a state of nature. Such were their land estates.

At the period with which our history has chiefly to do, these three personages were engaged in a copartnership concern. But, at one time, they had all carried on business separately, and on their own accounts. Long ago, however, John had so managed as to obtain some sort of mortgage, or other security, over his neighbour Patrick's estate, and taking advantage of this, and of Pat's want of management, at the time, he had contrived to get into possession of the property, settled many of his own tenants upon it, and otherwise acquired the full controul. There being no "Incumbered Estates Court" in those days, however, he never was able to procure a free title, so that a constant wrangle and dispute went on. Patrick never could be induced to consider himself as

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entirely disinherited. Whenever he fancied he had suffered greater ill usage than ordinary, he got up some new law-suit, about the property itself, or its management, which always ended in his sinking deeper and deeper in the mire; and eventually he became a mere hanger-on, and dependant, of his former neighbour, John.

One of the chief causes of personal dispute between the two was, that John, who frequented what was known as the church of *Saint Henry*—so called from having been erected by a worthy of that name, prototype of the mythological person, so popular in nursery literature, as Bluebeard, or the Wife-destroyer, insisted upon Patrick's attending worship in the same building; although he belonged to a rival establishment, known as *Saint Peter's*, from the circumstance of its being built by the apostle Peter, with stones, or bricks, which he had carried all the way from Jerusalem to Rome, and thence to the west country, in his pocket—a miracle impossible to to be sufficiently admired. Many's the quarrel this same matter of St. Peter's and St. Henry's produced, between these two—although some people were wicked enough to say the real difference was scarcely perceptible.*

With regard to Sandy, John had tried a somewhat similar plan; getting him into a submission, or arbitration, with regard to his estate, under which he was induced to deposit the titles in John's hands, of which the latter attempted to take advantage, by entering into possession, as in the case of Patrick, on the pretence that he himself had some preferable right or interest in the property. The dishonesty of the thing was sufficiently apparent, but this did not deter the arbiter from following out his scheme. Sandy was sorely put about, to be sure—but, by dint of great exertions, and owing especially to the ability of one of his managers, known as Robert the B—, from his great energy and perseverance of character, the lawsuit, in which parties had become involved, was finally settled, and John's claims abandoned. It was related of this Robert, that he had been greatly encouraged in his efforts towards the freedom of the estate, by an old weaver, in whose cottage he had spent the night, on the occasion of one of his journeys, and who showed a

* The usually accurate historian is in error as to the erection of John's church. The learned and indefatigable "New Zealand traveller"—whose advent was so distinctly foretold in "Macaulay's Prophecies"—has demonstrated, in his treatise regarding the Bridge, upon which the Prophet represents him as standing,—that the edifice referred to was in reality erected by Saint Peter. The way in which Henry came to be connected with it was this. The tenants had attacked and threatened to knock down the building, when he interposed in its defence. But, immediately after, and because of some interference in the matter of his wives, he turned round, broke open the door, robbed the money-chest, turned the Priest about his business, put in another of his own selection, and called the building itself his own. It is a singular circumstance, showing how tenacious John Bull always was about everything in the shape of *titles*, or *emblems* of honour, that he constantly insisted on Henry's descendants using a title given him for defending the old church, notwithstanding the very opposite course that gentleman afterwards followed.—*Editor.*

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wonderful perseverance in mending his threads, when they had been very often broken. Owing to this dispute, the parties long continued on anything but friendly terms. They were constant and obstinate rivals in business, to their great mutual loss—and indeed they were sometimes like to ruin each other altogether. John, however, as having the largest estate and capital, suffered much less in all this than his poorer neighbour, whose boldest and most promising speculations were frequently thwarted by John's jealousy.

Now, the way on which these two rivals came about to be friends and partners, was this:—It so happened that they both had a fixed rule in their establishments, that the situation of chief manager, should be what is termed "hereditary," a thing very common in those days. The families of their managers at one time intermarried, and both the parties in office dying, one fellow called *Solomon*, by reason of his great learning, and who was chief manager in Alexander's establishment, claimed the management of John's also, which claim was admitted. So he was installed amidst great rejoicings; both parties supposing that the circumstance would, by and by, cure all their jealousies and rivalries. This, however, was no such easy matter. The separate establishments continued to exist as before. The chief manager removed his office to John's counting-house, and in fact scarcely ever showed himself in Sandy's establishment at all—leaving it entirely to the charge of underlings. Notwithstanding the sort of connection which had thus been created, John continued to be as jealous as ever about his former customers, refusing to allow his neighbour to deal with them, or even to act in the same line of trade. Not content with this, he even insisted that Sandy should not deal with his own former customers, because he, John, had got into some sort of dispute with them; and thus poor Sandy was like to be entirely ruined. In place of the connection with his neighbour proving a source of riches and honour, (as he fondly imagined it would), he found his trade almost at a standstill, his warehouses empty, and his vessels rotting in idleness.

Another thing that tended to mar the good effects, that might otherwise have arisen from the connection, was the circumstance of John's trying to follow the same plan as he had adopted towards Patrick, with respect to church-going, and insisting upon Sandy, his family and tenants, attending the same church as himself, and deserting the one they had already selected. This was such a favourite scheme with John (or at least with those who managed his affairs) that nothing would serve him but Sandy must yield the point. Sometimes he tried it in one way, and sometimes in another; but his neighbour was equally stubborn on the other side. It was in vain John dwelt upon the assertion that his church had been built by an architect who had served a regular apprenticeship, and was *legally* entitled to erect such an edifice, while Sandy's was the

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work of one who had taken up the craft at his own hand. Equally vain was it to point out, how handsome and elegant John's building was, while the other was scarcely better than a shapeless barn. With a want of appreciation of "architectural influences," wholly incomprehensible to those who worship the "fine arts," and believe these are to regenerate human nature, Sandy stuck to the notion, that piety and devotion were perfectly consistent with simplicity.

In their discussions about this matter, Sandy would often refer to the advice of one *Knocks*, by whom the old St. Peter's Church, at one time standing on his estate, which had become a mere haunt for the rooks, had been knocked down, and the new kirk built—who used to say that "the best way of getting rid of the rooks was to pull down the rookery." So Sandy declared, whatever his neighbour might choose to do, in this respect, he, at least, was determined *not to invite the birds back again.* "In ae word," said he, at last, taking off the broad blue bonnet he then wore, and using the language he had been familiar with as a boy—"In ae word, John, I believe, in my conscience, that God's no' to be worshipped wi' acceptance, only in temples made wi' hands. When I gang into the presence o' my Maker, I think the less pomp and finery there is aboot me, the better for my speerit's weelfare; and as for your plan, *I winna stand it.*" And thereupon he clapped his bonnet on his head, and walked off, with an expression that should have warned his neighbour against pressing the subject further.

But John was ill advised; and so he continued to use all manner of means to carry his object. At last, by dint of perseverance, he succeeded in getting his own minister admitted to preach, one day, before Sandy and his tenants, and fancied everything was in a fair way to a proper understanding. But, when something happened to be said, offensive to their notions, one old woman got up, and flung the three-legg'd stool, she had been sitting on, at the minister's head. This led to a regular row; and the result of it all came to this, that John was compelled to yield, and leave his neighbour to attend his "kirk," as he chose to call it, in his own way.

Having settled this matter, things should perhaps have gone on more smoothly; but John continued the old course, of monopolising the customers and markets he had dealt with, and at the same time interfering with Sandy's freedom of dealing with others. In fact, although they were, in some sense, connected, they were almost as bitter rivals as before. Various plans were, from time to time, suggested, for the cure of these evils, but old jealousies and prejudices were hard to overcome. At length it was proposed that they should enter into a regular contract of co-partnership, under one general board of management and of advice—with a certain common stock, and mutual interest in the profits and losses thereon. This might seem a simple enough matter at first sight; but, when the parties'

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agents set about adjusting the articles of contract, it was no easy affair to bring them to a conclusion.

On the very threshold, there was the difficulty of arranging about a company *firm*. Both parties having been long before the public, and their respective "houses" having acquired a certain reputation, under their old-established names, each would have considered it a degradation, and an injury, to sink his own name in that of the other. John, indeed, prided himself in the extent of his own establishment, and connexions; but Sandy, on the other hand, was equally tenacious about his well-established reputation, and the enterprise of his family. No merchant, or professional man, he said, who has long carried on business on his own account but must be naturally averse to sacrifice his position, by becoming subordinate to another, however respectable. This could not be gainsaid; and so John (who was really at bottom the most anxious about the partnership,) had to *consent to sink his own name*, and propose an entirely new firm. This solved the difficulty, and so the first article of the contract was adjusted to this effect,—"That the two existing concerns, heretofore carried on by the parties, shall be amalgamated into one, under the company firm of 'John & Alexander,' in which name all the transactions of the company, and all correspondence, bills, contracts, advertisements, and other documents, by and to the concern, shall be carried on, subscribed, issued, and accepted."

The article as to management, also, caused no small difficulty,—but finally, it was adjusted *by the agents*, that there should be boards of supervision, deliberative and executive, at the former of which the parties, by themselves or their proxies, should have a certain number of votes, corresponding to the proportion between their capital stocks, the number of their tenants, and their contributions to the expenses of the joint concern. Other articles were then agreed to, on the basis of equal rights, privileges, immunities —equal contributions, in proportion to the amount of the parties' stock and property—and mutual intercourse with each other's tenants, customers, and correspondents. At the same time express stipulations were introduced, to the effect that neither party should interfere with the other in attending his own place of worship, and for the preservation of the buildings themselves, and the payment of the ministers. The same provision was made with reference to the school upon Sandy's estate, and his right to regulate his own tenants, servants and family, according to rules previously in existence. It was further agreed, among other things, that the *sign-boards* heretofore used at the different warehouses, and by which these had been distinguished, as also the seals, used in the sealing of their correspondence, and authentication of certain documents, should be preserved, as particularly specified in the contract—and that the signals, formerly used by the parties' vessels, should be

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combined, without precedency, so that neither party might feel that his dignity or importance was in any way impaired or interfered with.

All this was not accomplished without a great deal of discussion and irritation, as well between the principals themselves, as the agents employed. John maintained that he had conceded too much, while Sandy maintained that his agents had sacrified his interests, in material particulars, and did not hesitate even to assert that the gentlemen employed, on his part, had been *bribed* by John to do so. Be that as it may, the contract was finally completed, with sullen acquiescence, signed, sealed, and delivered, and these ancient rivals became partners for the future,—for good or for evil.

How they conducted themselves in this new relation; how they prospered in business; and how it fared with our friend Alexander, in particular, will appear in the subsequent chapters of this true history.

CHAPTER II.

PROFESSING that, of the three personages, who are the subjects of this history, Alexander is more especially our hero, it may, perhaps, be expected, by his admirers, that we should, at least, represent him in the most favourable light possible—giving prominence to his virtues, and throwing a shade over his failings, and failures. But this we cannot do, consistently with those great rules of historical writing, now so generally established in the world of letters. These rules may be stated thus—In writing the history of one's native country, or of his own ancestors, the historian is bound not only to reject everything like tradition, and everything that has been said or written by contemporaries who give partial testimonies—whatever is of a laudatory character being set down as partial. He is bound to receive with scepticism, and represent as doubtful, everything bearing the stamp of heroism, or elevation of character or conduct. Wherever popular, or national, honour or applause is connected with a man's memory, he is bound to assume, and try to prove, that the thing is a mere delusion; and if he can make it appear dubious that such a man ever lived, so much the better. In cases where historical events, reflecting glory, or the reverse, upon his country, are differently represented, by friends and foes, he is bound to prefer the statements of the enemy, as most correct and worthy of belief. In the case of national, or party, contests, if an enemy has been guilty of fraud, deceit, or cruelty, and, more particularly, if these crimes have been committed by some one filling a large space in the

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world's eye, they must all be touched with a gentle hand; but if the oppressed or deceived have been guilty of retaliation, then they must be condemned as barbarians. It is in this way that a writer may acquire the reputation of a philosophical historian, and cherished popular delusions be effectually dissipated. When not carried away by the weakness of humanity, we shall apply ourselves to our task, with these important rules constantly before us.

To proceed then. It must be confessed that the partnership between John and Alexander, did not, for many years at least, produce the good effects promised by its promoters. For this there were many reasons. The old established feelings of rivalry, which had formerly existed, could not possibly have been allayed for a time; and these had been rather increased than otherwise by the irritations connected with arranging the contract, and the impression, on Sandy's part, that he had been over-reached. Nor were John's conduct, and the circumstances that occurred after the new arrangement, at all calculated to mend the matter. The general principle on which their connection was founded, seemed theoretically fair enough in itself. But the relative position of parties was such as to produce very serious practical inequalities. Thus, although there was no stipulation made to that effect, it fell out that the chief manager's residence and offices came to be situated on John's estate —that the board meetings were all held in John's counting-house— that the whole machinery for joint management was located there. And out of this it arose that Sandy himself, and such of his family as should have been at home, looking after home matters, were very frequently absent at John's house; the consequence of which was, that the clerks, and others in the offices, and the servants on the estate, felt seriously discouraged and depressed. At the same time, it unfortunately happened that, in place of acting a generous part towards an old enemy, now become a friend, although poorer than himself, John chose to behave in such a way as to aggravate rather than lessen the evil. In fact, he conducted himself just as if he supposed Sandy had become his servant and dependant, by purchase —a course that was, for a time, highly resented on the other side, and led to constant heart-burnings.

As an example of the sort of things John did in this way, reference may be made to the matter of "excise." Before the partnership, Sandy's tenants were in use to brew such beverages as they had a liking for, without let or hindrance—and they were rather partial to what were denominated Tippeny and Usquebaugh— giving rise to the couplet—

> "Wi' tippeny we fear nae evil,
> Wi' usqueba we'll face the devil."

They were also in the habit of purchasing claret, and other wines, from their neighbour *Johnie Crapeau*, without Sandy's thinking it necessary to interfere. But part of the new arrangement was, that

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they should pay a tax on all these brewings and purchases of wine; and to carry this into effect, a number of "Inquisitors" required to be employed, under the name of "gaugers," or "excisemen," whose duty it was to prowl about constantly, and exact a sum of money on every jug-full of tippeny or claret, and if this was not forthcoming, then to seize the beverage itself, for the benefit of the company.

Perhaps if this duty had been committed to some of Sandy's own family, with whom the tenants were acquainted, the annoyance might have been quietly submitted to. But, under the pretence that John's sons alone knew the business, a set of vermin were sent down, who made themselves, and the partnership itself, perfectly odious. So strong was the feeling excited in this way that the name "exciseman" or "gauger," became a synonyme for contemptible, all over the estate, and it was no uncommon thing to see pictures representing Satan carrying off these obnoxious officials on his shoulders amidst the shouts of the bystanders. This state of matters is supposed to have given rise to the famous *Homé*-ric stanza:—

> "Bold and erect the son of Alpine stood,
> Old was his mutton, and his claret good:
> Let him drink port, his partner Johnie cried;
> He drank the poison, and his spirit died."

The same thing was displayed in matters more serious; and now became apparent the fatal defect in the contract of partnership, which gave to John, even in matters affecting Sandy's own domestic affairs, such a large preponderance at the meetings of the board of advice. In consequence of this, John could always over-rule Sandy's remonstrances, and, practically, set aside the conditions of agreement, whenever he was so inclined. In this way, he took it upon him, very shortly after the partnership was established, to make a serious innovation upon Sandy's kirk arrangements, by conferring upon certain individuals called *Patrons*, the power of naming the ministers who were to preach. This was a heavy blow to Sandy's notions; and in fact turned out one of the most serious misfortunes he ever suffered, from the discontent and quarrels it afterwards produced among the tenants; many of whom, rather than submit to such a course, chose, from time to time, to build kirks of their own. Some of Sandy's biographers will have it that this circumstance lay at the bottom of the total absence of spirit and energy which came eventually to affect his general character. But this being one of those popular delusions that rest upon tradition, we are bound to reject it.

Without going into too many particulars, it seems to be admitted by the most learned and impartial writers, that, whatever good this partnership did to John Bull, it failed, for a long time, to effect much good for his partner. In place of its giving an impulse to Sandy's industry and enterprise, the effect seemed to be the

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reverse; and he became quite dull and spiritless. In fact, his chief occupation seemed to be, grumbling about his unfortunate position, and the ruin, as he alleged, of his tenantry and estates. Among the many unhappy circumstances in his lot—but one for which his partner certainly was not responsible—was a sort of dispute that had subsisted about the chief manager. Alexander and John had, with one accord, dismissed the chap who had been in office, and selected another. But, some of the members of both families being attached to the ex-manager, were constantly plotting for his return; and among these, several of Sandy's sons, who were partial to the Roman dress formerly spoken of, were the most active. This kept the whole joint concern, but especially Sandy's department, in a constant ferment, until at last these party-coloured gentry carried the matter the length of seriously threatening to take possession of the business and estates altogether; and with such energy did they set about it, that although only a few in number, acting in opposition to their father, and the rest of the family, they well nigh succeeded in turning the whole management topsy turvy. But, those of John's sons who had promised to join them, being almost all relatives of the celebrated *Bob Acres*, their courage oozed entirely out at their finger ends—and so the project failed.

John had laughed at this project at first; but the way in which it was prosecuted thoroughly frightened him out of his propriety. He had almost forgotten his old contests with Sandy himself, and had gradually come to think of him—when he did so at all—with contempt. It was now evident, however, that there was still too much of the old spirit in some of his youngsters; and so, strange as it may appear, this unsuccessful scheme was the commencement of a better state of things. It relieved Sandy himself from a constant source of annoyance at home, and it secured some degree of attention to his affairs, on the part of the boards—executive and deliberative.

And now a new phase appeared in Sandy's circumstances and affairs. The cessation of serious collisions between the two neighbours, whose interests should have been substantially identical, had begun to produce its effects. They were gradually getting more and more into each other's ways. Their manufacturing and commercial operations became every day more extensive, and more prosperous. They sunk mines—they smelted ore—they spun, they wove—they built vessels—they opened establishments in every quarter of the globe, and had ships sailing in every sea. They improved their estates, also, with much success, especially Sandy, whose fields, generally, now produced all kinds of grain, in place of their old crop of thistles. From being proverbially poor, Sandy was becoming rich. His own money-making energies became wonderfully developed under this change of circumstances; and he cultivated with assiduity, in himself and his family, all those

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acquirements and accomplishments which could aid them in the career of material prosperity. In fact, they bade fair quite to outstrip John and his family, in their own favourite pursuits.

In the meantime, no doubt, the partners had frequent struggles with rival establishments, especially that of Sandy's old acquaintance *Johnie Crapeau.* These occasionally led to what were termed "hostile meetings;" and when this was the case, Sandy and Patrick joined in the affair with a sort of hereditary gusto, not quite in honest John's way. From all these disputes, however, the partners, upon the whole, came out with success—and Sandy took no little credit for the ability sometimes displayed by himself and his family. He was constantly boasting of this, and was sometimes heard to say, in confidence, that his partner John was, after all, a bit of a drudge, who required a head, and an infusion of new blood, before he could accomplish anything of consequence. In fact, he insinuated that he himself, and Pat, (notwithstanding all his disadvantages,) were the tongue of the trump, where serious competition, or danger, was to be encountered. On the other hand, it must be confessed, John grumbled sadly at the way his partner's family contrived to get themselves into situations of trust. But Sandy answered, that the preference, such as it was, arose simply from their greater steadiness, and intelligence, and the superior education they got at the old school established on his estate; and that, to speak the truth, it was all for John's advantage, and by his own choice, that such situations were held by his, Sandy's family.

Among their other troubles, the management of poor Patrick's affairs was none of the least. Long as he had been in a subordinate position, he still often caused great confusion, and threatened to ruin the whole concern—the old dispute about the church being the never-failing source of dissension. One remedy proposed for these quarrels and complaints was that Patrick should be admitted—or rather seduced, for he was no way inclined—to become a partner, along with John and Alexander, in the joint concern; and this was eventually carried into effect. On this occasion, the Company firm was altered to "John, Alexander, & Co." But really this change did not much mend the matter, in a social or commercial point of view. Patrick and his family might be useful in fighting out quarrels and disputes abroad; but, at home, he was as idle and as miserable as before. The fact is, he had been placed in a radically wrong position, in his first connection with John, and there was no getting him out of it. The consequence of all this was, that Patrick continued a constant drain on the exchequer, while he put precious little, if any thing, into it.

As already said, Sandy, and some, at least, of his family and tenants had been bettering their condition, by industry and frugality. But this was by no means without its drawbacks; and, as Sandy would have said, without seeing its application to himself—"A's no

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gowd that glitters." He might be getting richer. He might now dress in finer apparel, and have learned to assume what were styled "polished manners." It might be a very fine thing for some of his sons to go and visit at John's mansion, eating delicate dinners, and drinking expensive wines. It might be very pleasant, too, for those who got into situations of trust at head quarters, or in the company's foreign establishments, to drive about in coaches, in place of walking on their feet, as their father had to do in his younger days. But, as for Alexander, personally, it was quite evident that some serious change was coming over his character, for the worse. Formerly, if he was poor, and, of necessity, frugal in his expenditure, he was at the same time of an independent spirit, and "given to hospitality;" if not remarkably polished in his address, he was sincere and truthful, while his honesty was a proverb; if somewhat extravagant in his notions about his ancestors, his pride was chiefly directed to their honourable actions, the recollection of which was a cherished source of generous inspiration. Formerly, if somewhat stern and uncompromising in his religious views and demeanour, he was earnest and devout; living and acting under an impression of the truth of the profound enunciation, that "man shall not live by bread alone"—in other words, that there are influences, spiritual and moral, affecting men's character and condition, paramount to the greatest material advantages, and, without which, such apparent advantages are evil in place of good. Now, he was becoming luxurious and effeminate, and hospitality was forgotten. He had learned, along with politeness, a considerable share of insincerity. He was becoming ashamed of his ancestors, and even affected sometimes to laugh at John's stale jokes about their poverty. He was perhaps more "liberal" in his views, but he was losing his earnestness; and he was getting thoroughly immersed in the worship of mammon. The consequence was, that his commercial importance failed to secure him the honourable position he had formerly maintained, amongst his neighbours and correspondents, by means of his personal reputation.

While Sandy was thus absorbed in the pursuit of gain, and diverted, by a variety of other causes, from keeping a steady eye upon his true position, John began once more to feel that he might do as he pleased. He not only made such arrangements, in regard to the business as best suited himself, but when his partner occasionally ventured to grumble, treated his remonstrances with contempt. He continued to transfer all the principal foremen, clerks, and others, even those in charge of Sandy's peculiar affairs, to his own part of the establishment. He extracted the very last penny from Sandy and his tenants, and lavished the company funds on his own property, and that of his friend Patrick. Among other things, he had succeeded in abolishing the office of the Chief Clerk, who previously represented Sandy at the Executive Board, so that there was literally

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no one to whom any complaint or application could be made with a chance of its being understood or attended to. By an express clause in the contract, a power had been reserved to Sandy of stamping and issuing "Tokens," as a circulating medium of exchange; but, upon the pretence of this causing unnecessary expense, the stipulation referred to was cancelled, by means of John's majority of votes, and Sandy compelled to use only such tokens as were stamped and issued at John's office—and a variety of regulations were, from time to time, issued, by which Sandy's money transactions were cramped and fettered, in conformity with some of John's peculiar crotchets.

One of the consequences arising from this procedure was, that many of Sandy's tenants were compelled to desert the poorer farms; and, as if to add insult to injury, large tracks of land were turned into shooting grounds for John's sons, who seemed to think that birds and beasts were of more value than the men who had formerly dwelt there. At the same time, it must be confessed, these proceedings were actively promoted by some of Sandy's own family—who should have known better.

By and by, these evils and annoyances grew to be so notorious that Sandy, patient and long-suffering as he had become, could not forbear from himself making a stand against them. Some of the family who lived at home, and saw what was going on, swore they would not longer endure it, and the tenants themselves were heard to say, they could see no reason why they should be taxed for the purpose of building fine houses on John's estate, and paying a host of policemen and others, to guard his and Patrick's premises.

The proverb says, "it is the last straw that breaks the camel's back," and so it was in this instance. It will be recollected that, by the contract, Sandy had carefully and jealously stipulated for the preservation of his old and favourite sign-board, under which he had long carried on business so honourably, and which was so intimately associated, both in his own eyes, and the eyes of his customers, with all his struggles and efforts. Well, it appeared that this continued to be rather a sore subject with John, who was never able to reconcile himself to Sandy's assertion of equality, and naturally supposed that one of the best methods of neutralizing this, was to get the obnoxious sign-board, with its old emblems and mottoes, gradually put out of sight. So, one fine morning, some of Sandy's family found that Master John and his servants had, very deliberately, taken down the old board, which was lying ignominiously in the gutter, and were putting up in its place, a mongrel sort of copy of the one which John had formerly used while they were rivals, and which was, in this shape, necessarily connected with associations the reverse of pleasing. In fact, no one, with a particle of delicacy or gentlemanly feeling, to say nothing of common honesty, would have attempted such a thing, and no one with the

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smallest degree of spirit would have submitted to it. But besides this, John had, in the same way, altered the company's seals, and caused his own signals to be used on board the ships, even those sailing from Sandy's wharves.

These proceedings of his were indirectly injurious, but directly they were positively insulting—and so Sandy, with all his devotion to mammon, and all his recently-acquired respect for "practical business habits," really felt them in his heart, although he was ashamed to speak out. Some of the younger and more enthusiastic of the family, however, carried the feeling a great deal farther. They had been accustomed to consider the old sign-board over their father's warehouse door, and the seals and sailing signals, as sort of *tangible evidences* of their own equality with Master Bull's family—who were exceedingly apt to assume airs of superiority; and these things were, therefore, looked upon with a degree of interest, which their intrinsic value might not otherwise have suggested. These youngsters, consequently, were quite disposed to kick up a row about the affair, and some of them even resumed whistling an old tune, "Such a parcel of rogues in a nation"—that had been very much in vogue at one time, in connection with their father's complaints against the conduct of his agents, in the matter of the contract. John affected to feel great annoyance and even *alarm*, at all this; and, as he himself said so, we are bound to assume that it was true.

The subject of his conduct in the partnership affairs being thus brought on the carpet, all sorts of complaints were immediately furthcoming—showing how John had broken, or neglected, many of the articles and conditions agreed upon. When all these things were fairly brought together, people could not help wondering how a person of so much spirit as Sandy Macalpine had once been, should so long have endured them. But alas! Sandy's spirit was, now, sadly diluted.

There was another thing that caused a good deal of discussion at this time—but which Sandy himself, oddly enough, was very slow to comprehend. This was, that John had been gradually introducing a practice of entirely laying aside the use of the company *Firm*, and substituting his own name, as if the entire concern had been his. Not content with pulling down Sandy's sign-board, and putting up his own, altering the seals, and sailing signals, he introduced his individual name, in place of the company's, into the Invoices, Receive Notes, "Bot. ofs," &c., used in the business—even in Sandy's own department. He signed almost all his own correspondence, "John Bull," instructing the travellers, and clerks, and inviting customers and others, to follow the same practice. In consequence of this, the chief clerk, or secretary—a son of Patrick's, who, from the extent to which he possessed his father's peculiarity, formerly described as "blarney," and from the remarkable success

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with which he, for many years, blinded his employers to his real character, was vulgarly supposed to have been initiated in the mysteries of *Palmistry*, and its kindred sciences,—took it upon him to call at Sandy's counting-house, one day, and cooly inform the young Macalpines, the clerks, and others, that they were all henceforth to consider themselves as members of Master Bull's family. At the same time, he flattered them mightily, by telling them, in his usual style, what a remarkably clever, intelligent, and "persevering" set of fellows they were, how much his master admired them, and what an honour he, himself, considered it to be, to have an opportunity of conversing with them. They seemed to be all quite delighted at this flattering notice of the chief secretary, and sent him away with "loud cheers."

It so happened, however, that one chiel who chanced to have been absent on this occasion, and so had not been subjected to the influence of the blarney, took exception to the proceeding, telling the others they had all been made fools of—that they had shown very small respect to their own father and employer,—and that they could only be admitted into John's family in the character of *bastards*. He also wrote a letter to the chief secretary, telling him he had been guilty of a piece of unqualified impertinence—and this coming to John's ears, was another great offence to his pride and self-sufficiency.

All these complaints and remonstrances, Master Bull and his family tried to ridicule, as unfounded and absurd, saying their good friend S-a-w-n-y seemed to have parted with his senses, and pretending to think he was about to demand a dissolution of the co-partnership, contrary to law. In these circumstances, Sandy thinking it the best way of coming to a proper understanding, put on his hat one day, and went to call for John at his own house, for the purpose of having a deliberate conversation with him upon the subject—*reasoning* with John, as he termed it.

How he was received, and what was the nature of their conversation, those who feel any interest in the matter will discover in our next chapter.

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CHAPTER III.

At the close of the last chapter, we left our hero, Sandy Macalpine, preparing for a personal interview with his partner, Master Bull. Staff in hand, Sandy trudged along, on his way to John's mansion-house, turning over in his mind all the various "grievances" he and his family complained of, until, by dwelling on these, he had worked himself quite up to the humour of "vindicating his rights," as he phrased it, at all hazards. In this spirit he knocked at John's door, and was admitted—to the hall, until he should be announced, and John's pleasure ascertained, as to his farther access. By-and-by, through rows of flunkies, and other hangers-on, he was ushered into the library, and told to wait, as John was having luncheon with the Chief Manager of *Mons. Crapeau's* establishment, and certain other of the foreign correspondents of the house. Sandy had, consequently, full time to cool his heels—and his courage, and come to a proper sense of what a very small personage he really was. But, looking around him, and casting his eye upon books carefully labelled as "Magna Charta," "Bill of Rights," &c., &c.—being vindications, in various forms, of the principles of equity, about which John was known to make a mighty fuss at times; and seeing, moreover, several portraits of individuals of his own family, such as Smith Macalpine, Watt Macalpine, and others, placed in positions of honour, as having been eminent contributors to the wealth and prosperity of the concern—seeing all this, he felt considerably reassured, before John made his appearance.

When that gentleman did appear, he could not altogether lay aside the air of one who is secretly conscious he has been doing something unhandsome, but wishes to carry it off with a high hand. He was, at the same time, very dignified and important, (as well he might, considering the great affairs he had been discussing in the other room, of which we shall have occasion to speak more fully anon), and indicated, as plainly as a man's manner may do, that he considered Sandie's visit very much of a bore. However, after certain preliminaries—which John never in any circumstances could dispense with—about the "state of the weather glass," and "public news," he at length condescended to enquire what had obtained for him the honour of a personal visit from his partner. The following is the substance of the conversation, which is said to have taken place :—

Alexander.—"I have called, friend John, just to have some explanation with you, anent those 'grievances' about which my family and tenants have of late been complaining so much."

John.—"Oh! aw! yes; I understand you are about to demand a dissolution of copartnery. But, I tell you plainly, Sir, I won't

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consent to such a thing. Our connection is a settled point, not to be disturbed; and, I must say, I am ashamed to see a person, of your good sense, and industrious habits, commencing a parody of Patrick's ridiculous conduct in this respect."

A.—"Really, John, the less you say about your friend Patrick, and his doings the better. You should know best how you and he stand; but it is rather too much for you to attempt to play him off, in dealing with me. I cannot help, too, returning your left-handed compliment, by saying, that your affected apprehension of my proposing a dissolution, must arise from the consciousness that I have good cause for something of the kind. I have not, however, hitherto spoken of it; neither has any one on my behalf, that I am aware of. So don't make any further flourish on that subject. The cordial continuance of our partnership, is a thing, not only desirable for our own sakes, but beneficial for our correspondents, and the public; and however much I may think I had occasion to find fault, at the time it began, so far from now proposing to dissolve the contract, I have brought a copy of it with me"—(pulls a paper from his pocket)—"and mean to refer to it in whatever I have to say."

J.—"Well, then, Sir, what *is* it you complain of? So far as I can ascertain, the whole matter is something about an old signboard. Now, Mr Macalpine, I am a plain man, and always speak my mind honestly and straightforward, as all the world knows. I have made myself what I am; and have no sympathy with any stuff about signboard, seals, and so forth. What can it matter, man, what sign is over your door, or motto on your seal, or signal on your ships, so long as you pay your way, keep a respectable house over your head, and have a sum at the credit of your banker's account? Such nonsense is fit only for schoolboys. Let us hear nothing more of it."

A.—"My dear Sir"—(Sandy spoke politely, because he saw John was flustered, and felt that, as yet, he had the best of the argument)—"My dear Sir, allow me to say your reference to the signboard is of a piece with the supposed 'dissolution.' You cannot be in earnest in saying you believe that to be the only grievance my family complain of; but, whatever I may think of it"—(and here Sandy began to show what was, in the district, known as the "white feather")—"I shall speak, in the meantime, of what even you must admit to be practical matters."

J.—(Perceiving at once his advantage—that a garrison, ashamed to defend its flag, is on the eve of capitulation)—"Practical matters, indeed! I suppose, now, you call my disuse of the company *firm* a practical matter? Why, Sir, it is a thing fit only to be laughed at. What do merchants and manufacturers, like you and me, care by what name we are called or known? Who ever heard of men engaged in business of any kind standing upon such puerilities."

A.—(Still further showing the white feather, aforesaid)—"I con-

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fess, it did strike me in a different light. I have heard of proposed business connections being broken off entirely, by reason of a difference about the firm. I know, too, that some of my family consider this as the root, or distinguishing symptom, of the whole evil—that evil being, permit me to say, without hurting your feelings, your practice of ignoring my position, under our contract. But let us postpone that also. As my son *Ebony* says, 'if that were all, although it be *illegal*, we might let it pass.' (Aside.) *Ebony*, being a lad of recognised spirit, surely my honour is safe enough in his keeping?"

J.—"Well, then, come to the point. There is nothing I hate like circumlocution; and, as already said, I always speak my own mind honestly and straightforward."

A.—"Ay, ay; speak and act *honestly*. That's all I ask."

J.—(Rather hotly)—"No man, Sir, ever accused John Bull of anything inconsistent with honesty."

A.—"Ahem! well, well, I don't mean to say you deliberately intend anything like injustice. But it matters very little, in reality, what reputation a man may have for being an 'honest fellow,' or 'a good-hearted fellow,' if he allows himself to be led into systematic breaches of the golden rule, through an overweening conceit of his own rights, or position—and to be free, that, in my apprehension, is sometimes the case with you, friend John. But let us avoid recrimination, and proceed with business."

J.—"Just keep in mind, then, that I am not accustomed to be spoken to in this style; and that, if you want any real practical evil redressed, you had better speak respectfully."

A.—(Awed by John's assumption of superiority)—"I would not offend for the world. Well, then; here is our contract. I need not remind you of our relative positions, before it was gone into. You know all that, when you choose to reflect. But, what I would impress upon your notice just now is, that it was a contract of partnership between equals. I admit I was not so rich as you. But I was independent. I had always paid my own way, and was in good credit; and, you must confess, I was a dangerous rival. The connection was for your interest, as well as mine. You know well, I would never have listened to it, had you explained that I was to be treated otherwise than as your equal. Our contract, therefore, was based upon that principle—whatever incidental inequalities it concealed. Was it not so?"

J.—"Without allowing it to be of any consequence, I may admit that my agents so arranged the matter—the more's the pity, as I seem destined never to hear the end of it."

A.—"Admitting this, then; I have been looking over the deed carefully, without being able to find any stipulation, to the effect that our manager should reside constantly on your estate—or that the Boards should sit exclusively there; and yet such has always

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been the case, the consequence being, that my estate and establishment have been constantly drained of men and money, to your advantage."

J.—"It would certainly have been an excellent joke, reversing the case!"

A.—"It certainly would: I quite agree with you there. But such an arrangement would not have occurred to me. I only hint at an occasional residence by our manager, and his family and servants, in the old mansion, where his predecessors lived regularly, and occasionally board meetings, in my premises, as things not impossible, and which would have somewhat equalized our position, and been beneficial to me and my tenants. Undoubtedly, the change made, in this respect, was a serious evil, requiring not a little to counterbalance it. But let that pass at present."

J.—"So you may. It is simply ridiculous to talk so. 'Where two men ride the same horse, one must be foremost;' and I assure you I am not disposed to play at 'ride and tie.'"

A.—"You have a polite way of putting things, certainly—but, as you remark, you are known as a plain-spoken person. But take a special point. When we went together, and long after, I had a chief clerk or secretary, who was a member of the executive board, and whose duty it was to see after the peculiar interest of my tenants. By your influence, this office was abolished; and, now, when the number of my family and tenants is immensely increased, and their interests have become so much more important and complicated, there actually is not a person at head quarters, to whom any one wishing to transact business with either board, can apply. They tell me that when they have anything of the kind to do, they are bandied about from one room to another, and generally end by coming home as they went—or being referred to some one who, from sheer ignorance, blunders the affair in hand. I ask you, as a man of common sense, if this is as it should be?"

J.—"No one cries out so much about economy, in our expenditure; and yet here are you proposing a change that would cost another salary, in addition to the great number we have already to pay—many of them to persons who are positively useless."

A.—"That's rather a singular looking objection—Don't you think that a salary, for a person who is essential to the management of important interests, might be obtained by abolishing some of these sinecures? For example, now, there is that fellow you dignify with the high-sounding title—'Chancellor,' is it?—connected with your *Lancaster* Farm. He confesses he does nothing for his salary; and not only is he paid a handsome salary, but he actually has a seat at the board of management!"

J.—"That is an office, Sir, which has long existed on my estate, and is necessary to my diginity. But, what can you want, when you have already your son, the lawyer, there, with such extensive

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powers and privileges, in regard to the affairs of your department?"

A.—"In answer, I would ask, if you really consider a lawyer to be the proper person for managing people's affairs? What can he know of farming, or mining, or ships, or manufactures, or commerce —unless what is put into his brief? But, besides this, he is up to the eyes in his own business; and he has no seat at the executive board. And when you speak of 'diginity,' does it not occur to you that something may be due to me, also, in that respect?"

J.—"There now, I consider the present arrangement is far more honourable for you, than the one you propose. You would not surely choose to be placed on a footing with my friend, Patrick? The same secretary acts for you and me. We are thus on a par. But I manage Patrick by deputy, as a subordinate personage."

A.—"Some things are matters of taste, and I do think you have no occasion to be over-sensitive for my respectability, when I am satisfied myself. But your remark is quite fallacious. Although we are copartners in business, you know that our estates, and family affairs, are arranged on totally different bases. The existing secretary is always one of your family; he knows nothing of my arrangements —he can neither sympathise with, nor advise about them—and must just act by a deputy, the lawyer you speak of. I want one of my own family, familiar with all my own peculiar arrangements, to have a seat at the board; and really the thing seems so reasonable in itself, that I cannot help thinking you have some unexplained motive in opposing it. As to Patrick's position; you remind me of the point of expense. You must admit that he is, in some respects, identified with yourself—having the same family, and other, regulations; his estate and labour put, literally, nothing into the common purse, while (without boasting) I contribute my full proportion; and, yet, he has not only one, but a whole establishment, of secretaries and others, devoted to his peculiar affairs, one or more of them sitting at the board. Do you seriously consider this a disadvantage on his part? If so, I am willing to make a somewhat similar experiment."

J.—"Oh! if you are begun with 'fallacies,' and 'bases,' and 'experiments,' you are beyond me. It is long since my friend, William —he of the *gridiron*—found out you were a 'feelosopher.'"

A.—"Really, John, I am not disposed to bandy compliments of this kind, and shall esteem it a favour if you will condescend to reason, and not jest."

J.—"Well, then, what do you say to my son, *Edward's* view of this matter? He has bought a farm on your estate, and takes an interest in your peculiar affairs—especially your mode of *maintaining*, or rather *starving*, your poor people—and should be an authority on the subject."

A.—"And what saith the sapient Edwardus?"

J.—"Why, he was elected by some of your tenants to sit at the board of advice. They lately badgered him about voting in favour of

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your plan. But he tells them, in the first place, that the cry of 'Justice to the Macalpines' is a mere party cry."

A.—"Which means?"

J.—"It means that the cry is got up by a party who would fain get themselves into the management, in place of those who are already in office."

A.—"Well, it is really difficult to meet such a charge otherwise than by giving it the 'lie direct;' it is so ridiculous. Pray, on which is it rested?"

J.—"Just look at those who take the lead. There is your son, the Knight of the Thistle, formerly deputy over Paddy's estate—there is your other son, the famous Historian—and the 'Cavalier' of Glenmutchkin. These all belong to the party who made themselves so active in opposing our carrying on the *grain trade*, pretending, forsooth, that it would ruin our farmers; and no doubt they would fain see themselves and their friends in office."

A.—"Anything else?"

J.—"What more would you have?"

A.—"And so, on this flimsy pretext you would have it that all my family who join in this 'cry' for justice, do so from such party motives. You know that the 'party' which opposed our grain speculations were chiefly in your own family. You know also that not one in a hundred of them has the least sympathy with me or my interests; and it is really giving the individuals named credit for a degree of simplicity beyond human nature, to suppose they could hope to make the demand, for redress of my grievances, a road to office. Truly, Master Edward must be a master of logic! Let us hear the rest of his case."

J.—"He says that the extent of your establishment, and the number of your family and tenantry, are so limited, that the appointment of a special secretary would lead to nothing but 'jealousies,' and 'jobbing,' and the improper influence of your elder sons—and that the true remedy for such evils is, to have patronage and power placed in the hands of some one at a distance."

A.—"In other words, he ventures to say that I am unfit to be trusted with my own affairs, and am only safe in leading-strings. Now, tell me, is it not a fact that our whole establishment, both your department and mine—but yours more especially—is in an uproar, at present, about 'jealousies,' and 'jobbing,' the improper influence of some of your family, and the consequent mismanagement of our foreign connexions?"

J.—"There is no denying it."

A.—"And has it occurred to you, or such as Master Edward, that the cure for this evil would be, to remove the management to my counting-house, or Patrick's, or—why not? to that of your next neighbour, Mons. Crapeau, with whom you have recently got up such an intimacy? If the argument be good for anything, it should be so applied. At the same time, allow me to say, Master Edward's proposi-

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tion is simply a piece of gratuitous insolence. Is there anything else?"

J.—"Yes; there is this. You are always crying out against what you call "centralization." Now, as Edward says, if you had such an official as you refer to, he would necessarily reside chiefly at the old mansion, where your manager's family lived, and thus the whole control of your affairs would come to be centralized there—to the manifest injury of other parts of your estate."

A.—"And when Edwardus broached such a singularity, did you think of putting him to school again? It will be an evil to centre the management of my peculiar affairs in a particular locality of my own estate, and as a cure for this, he recommends removing it to a more distant locality, in yours! He should really secure a patent for his discovery. But don't you think, if I am satisfied to try the experiment of restoring the ancient order of things, I may safely be left to do so, in so far as such objections as these are concerned?"

J.—"What you say may be all very plausible. But the scheme would not please my family. We have been accustomed having things our own way—and—and—in short, if we were yielding this, there would be no end to your demands."

A.—"I thought it would come to that. But let us consider another point. Our affairs are all ultimately controled by the votes of the board of advice, and you have eight to one, as compared with me. When we arranged our contract, the proportion was fixed according to our then numbers, and contributions to the general burdens. So, at least, it would appear from this deed. Now these proportions are greatly changed, and my pecuniary contributions immensly increased, producing an inequality, according to the spirit and meaning of the contract. I appears to me that a rectification of this would tend to remedy the grievances I complain of. Why should it not be done?"

J.—"Oh! it would be altogether inconvenient to commence any such operation at present."

A.—"No doubt, all such changes cause inconvenience in the making. I don't say it should be done off-hand, but I should like to have the *principle* acknowledged, with an understanding that it should be applied as soon as possible. Even when we lately 'reformed' the board, we did so upon the data I contend for, and I wish to see this carried out, so as to give me fair play, at least."

J.—"Really, partner, you are very partinacious, and troublesome. Reform of the board of advice, or that of management, in order to satisfy *my* family, may be an excellent thing. But the notion of setting about such a process, on your account, is out of the question. And besides, how can such individuals as the Knight of the Thistle, and his friends, be sincere in such a proposal, when they opposed, to the last, our former re-arrangement?"

A.—"I care nothing about the Knight of the Thistle, or any other individual in this matter. Is it just and right, or is it not?—that is the question."

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J.—"Really (yawning,) I have no leisure at present to discuss such questions, when, as you know, my time and attention are so much taken up with the affairs of our unfortunate correspondent and customer, Abdul, the Turkey merchant. Surely, you might find some more suitable occasion for such discussions?"

A.—"I will yield neither to you, John, nor any one else, in my exertions, and sacrifices, for an unfortunate friend. All the world knows that. But I don't exactly see why his affair should entirely supersede all our domestic concerns. However, there is another subject upon which I must remonstrate, once for all, and which is of such a purely *practical* kind that I don't see how you can avoid putting it right, when it is pointed out."

J.—"Do be brief, then, as my friends are waiting for me."

A.—"Well, it is this. It was necessary, of course, that, as co-partners, we should contribute, from our profits, towards the expenses of the joint management. This was consequently matter of arrangement—but I confess I did not altogether foresee how it was to work in practice. The result, however, has been, that in consequence of the management being entirely located on your estate—the boards—chief manager—clerks—treasurer, and others residing and spending their salaries there, and all the works for joint behoof being situated, and performed, there, your contributions are, in effect, *returned to your own pockets*, or those of your family; whereas, not only do my family go and spend their incomes at your mansions, but my contributions, as a partner, are sent out of my estate, and also spent in yours. As a purely commercial, pounds shillings and pence, question, I appeal to you if it is not so?"

J.—"Perhaps it may—but it can't be helped. As I said to you before, 'when two men ride the same horse, one of them must be foremost.'"

A.—"I'm not quite so sure of the application of that. I see, by the arrangements made for our friend, Patrick, the result is materially different with him. It occurs to me there are many parts of the management, peculiarly connected with my affairs, which might be located on my own estate, and the disbursements consequently made there, for the benefit of my tenants. If, as your son Edward suggests, the reappointment of a secretary for my affairs would cause the location of him and his establishment at home, this would have a similar tendency—and besides, it does appear to me that my tenants and workmen could just build ships, and do other work for the concern, as well as yours—thus still more equalizing the distribution of the joint expenditure."

J.—"My dear fellow, this is all a fallacy. We have now no longer separate interests; what is spent on *my* estate is, to all intents and purposes, spent on *yours*. You surely would not have us go back to the old days when we were rivals, ready to cut each other's throats and purses, in place of cultivating friendly and social relations amongst our families?"

A.—"I confess I don't see how doing, or asking, simple justice,

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should interfere with friendly relations. But since we are now all one, and what is spent on your estate is spent on mine, suppose we reverse the present practice, wholly or partially, so as to enable me, for a time, to say, 'what is spent on *my* estate, is spent on *yours*.' Of course, you can scarcely object to that?"

J.—"Abstractly, what you say may all be very well. But my estate being the larger, wealthier, and more populous, the present arrangements have, in the language of my secretary, the *Palmist*, become 'usual and convenient,' and cannot well be disturbed."

A.—"In short you act upon

> 'The good old rule, the simple plan,
> That they shall take who have the power,
> And they shall keep who can!'

But let me bring the matter to a narrower point still. Not content with expending my contributions, on joint objects, I find that every year, large sums are given away, out of the general fund, for objects entirely personal to yourself and Patrick, while comparatively, scarce a penny comes my way. Thus, you obtain sums for making and repairing the harbours on your estate—for embellishing your mansion-houses—for purchasing and laying out gardens, for the amusement of your family—for paying the policemen who watch your premises—for paying doctors and druggists, and so forth. The same thing applies to Patrick and his estate. Now," (warming with his subject) "to my simple apprehension, as a plain man of buisness, this looks marvellously like *embezzlement*. But I shall be glad to know how you excuse it."

J.—"There are plenty of excuses. First of all, you don't require harbours. Then, it is necessary to keep up my mansions, for the sake of my—or, if you must so have it—for the sake of the company's dignity, in the eyes of strangers. As to the gardens you refer to, you know that my family and servants require recreation, seeing they cannot amuse themselves with books, and the like, as yours do. And as to the policemen, the fact of the matter is—I really don't know how that stands; unless it be that your family and tenants don't require them, while mine and Patrick's do."

A.—"Very satisfactory, indeed! I really can have no hope of any change, after such a conclusive explanation. But, one word more. How is it that, in levying rents from our tenants, yours and Patrick's only pay upon the nett profits of their farms, after deducting various burdens, while mine are compelled to pay on the gross? This is much complained of, and surely is a *gross* injustice."

J.—"Ha! ha! ha! It is really quite refreshing to hear a sombre personage like you attempting a pun. I confess, however, I have not considered the point you refer to. But I recollect a member of the board, on one occasion, explaining the different incidence, by saying, that your tenants were much better farmers than mine and Patrick's, and could afford to pay more."

A.—"And were you satisfied with this?"

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J.—"Perfectly. And so should you, seeing the compliment it conveyed."

A.—"Compliment! Ay, ay; no lack of compliments when any thing is to be gained by them. So long as Sandy Macalpine chooses to play second fiddle, and swell the importance of his partner, we hear abundance of fine things about his good sense, industry, frugality, perseverance, intelligence, *courage*, and so forth. But the moment he attempts to assert his own position, he is a fool—or any other fine epithet that comes to hand. I have learned, of late, to value such compliments at their real worth. I suppose, now, that, for some similar reasons, I and my family and tenants, should be quite gratified at that infamous practice of having our firesides invaded, and our pockets picked, by swarms of Company's watchmen, who are *billeted* upon us, while you and yours are free from the annoyance?"

J.—"These watchmen are, unfortunately, necessary, in consequence of the dishonest practices of some of our neighbours, and your known public spirit should certainly make it a pleasure to entertain those who are entrusted with the guardianship of our property. What do you mean by calling the thing 'infamous?'"

A.—"I mean that it is not necessary, now-a-days. I mean that it is hateful and oppressive, in itself, and that the Company ought to make some other arrangement. I mean, moveover, that, while you and your tenants can say 'my house is my castle,' not to be intruded upon by strangers, it is an insult to put me, or my tenants, on a different footing—as if we were an inferior class, not possessed of the same delicate sense of propriety, or liable to be robbed, at any time, for the general convenience. That's what I mean by 'infamous.' If it be right, let us be placed on the same footing. If it implies any compliment, it is fair you should share in it."

J.—"Well, we shall see what can be done by-and-by. Meantime I shall instruct those in charge, to *make the annoyance as bearable as possible*. But, your indignation causes you to overlook the reason of the difference, in this matter, between my tenants and yours. The fact is, that the system now acted upon, in your case, was part of your arrangements, prior to our copartnership. It was guaranteed by our contract, and so has always been respected. It has been entirely from a sense of delicacy, I have never interfered with it."

A.—"I cannot but admire your delicacy! But (spreading out the contract,) let us see where this subject is referred to here."

J.—"Oh! it may not be referred to specially, but it falls within the spirit of the clauses by which your domestic arrangements are protected."

A.—"It falls neither within the letter nor the spirit; and pardon me for saying that I consider such a pretence on your part to be only adding insult to injury."

J.—"Come! come! This is not the way to deal with practical affairs. If you have any real ground of complaint, no doubt your representatives at the Board will see these put right. They are

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elected for the purpose, and should know best how matters stand. And now, let me say, there has been somewhat too much of all this, and I must advise you to go home, and mind your business. I am quite sure you have been put up to it by a set of silly youths, who have nothing more serious to think of. This is not a time for any discussions of the kind. Look at the advantages some of your family enjoy in my service; and all the benefits you derive from our connection. Don't make yourself ridiculous in the eyes of the world, by raking up all stories, which are fit only for schoolboys, and raving about sign-boards and the like; but lend a hand with our friend the Turkey merchant's affairs. And so, good day for the present."

A.—"Well but—"

J.—"O! let us hear nothing more of the matter. I really won't stand it."

And, hereupon, Master Bull, imitating his namesake, in the pathetic history, with which most of our readers must have been familiar in their youth, "gave the bell a strong pull," and bowed out his reluctant visitor, amidst the grins of the flunkies, who had been listening to the conversation we have narrated. John thereupon returned to dine with the representative of Mons. Crapeau, and the other gentlemen formerly noticed, and to consider how the Turkey merchant's estate could be saved from bankruptcy. Sandy, on the other hand, returned home, with a chop-fallen air, very different, indeed, from what he had worn when he set out on his mission. No doubt, he had had the best of the argument. *But mere reasoning won't always carry the day;* and he had allowed himself to be partly bullied, and partly laughed, entirely out of his position.

The next and concluding chapter will show what an error he committed, in this respect, and what was the end of it.

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CHAPTER IV.

ALTHOUGH honest Sandy Macalpine was not a little disappointed and crest-fallen, at the result of his "reasoning" with his partner, he was scarcely, as yet, prepared entirely to give up the demand for redress of his *grievances*. He continued, therefore, to agitate the question in a variety of shapes—sometimes in conversation—sometimes by correspondence—and at other times by appeals to the Boards. John and his family had now, however, found out Sandy's weak side—namely, an extreme sensitiveness to ridicule, accompanied by an over-anxiety to stand well with his neighbours, as a *sensible, practical, man of business*, priding himself on repudiating everything bearing a semblance to eleemosynary aid. Having made this discovery, the young Bulls, and their friends, were not sparing in the use of it; but plied poor Sandy, now with jokes and ridicule about his signboard, its emblems and mottoes, or his style of dress, and other peculiarities, when a youngster; and now with sneers founded on the assumption, that what he really wanted was, after all, nothing more than grants of money out of the company-purse. It was in vain Sandy now affected to say that he himself had never attached any great importance to the matter of the signboard, although some of his sons had naturally been indignant at the way in which John acted with regard to it. The subject was too fruitful of jokes to be abandoned; and Sandy's tormentors knew too well the advantage of riding off upon a theme, seemingly, foreign to the substantial points of a controversy, to forego their advantage. It was in vain that Sandy repudiated the charge of seeking any sort of pecuniary bonus, pointing to the whole course of his past life, to show that he was the last man to be accused of begging, or seeking to get on, otherwise than by his own exertions. It was vain to point out, at the same time, that there really were certain undertakings, which necessarily fell to be carried out by the company, although locally situated on his estate—as was daily practised on the estates of his partners; and it was equally vain for him to say, "recognise the principle that each must carry out the local conduct of his own estate, and I shall be too happy; but, while you daily violate that principle, in your own favour, don't pretend to criticise my demands, in this style." In the face of all this, every reclamation was perseveringly stigmatized as a "howl" for pecuniary aid. Sandy was thus in danger of being fairly clamoured down, and even those who should have defended him, were mean enough to join in the assault.

Foremost among the assailants was a literary son of John's, who, by his dextrous versatility, had acquired the cognomen of *Weathercock*, seeing that, what way soever the wind of events might blow, he was always sure to swim with the current. Possessed, undoubtedly, of extensive information, great talents, and no

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small boldness in advocating his views—where he knew he would be backed by the multitude—no one could rely upon him for any length of time; but he always so contrived his change of sides, in any discussion, as to make it appear as if this were the cause, and not the effect, of a similar change in others. One day, he was all for strict adherence to the antiquated arrangements of the Board, and the next he was equally clear about having these *reformed*. One day, he was a determined monopolist, swearing that, unless a man could grow sufficient corn, for his own consumption, from the palm of his hand, he must soon be starved; and the next he would announce that the demand for freedom of the grain trade was a "great fact," and must receive effect. One day he would declare that Abdul, the Turkey merchant, was an old dotard, utterly insolvent, and ready for the Gazette; and the next he would praise him as an excellent customer, honest, faithful, and every way worthy of being supported by the company. At one time he would contend that a bold peasantry were a country's pride; and, shortly after, he would bawl for the extinction of all small farms, and the conversion of the estates into extensive *grain factories*—saying the small farmers were a set of pests. But so dextrously were these, and other, shiftings managed, as changes in *the times*, rather than himself, that Weathercock had come to be quite an oracle, not only among John's family and tenants, but with Sandy's also. In fact, nobody dared open his mouth in opposition to anything he said, without being exposed to a torrent of a peculiar style of abuse or ridicule, usually styled "thunder," quite sufficient to put down even the most stubborn. It would be unjust to deny that the thunder was sometimes really deserving of the name; but it would be unworthy of a veracious chronicler not to record that, occasionally, it resembled more nearly the effects produced by the pounded rosin and sheet iron of the theatre. Still, those who were accustomed to tremble at the real, were not very able to detect the mock fulmination; and so they were ready to swear by this hero, whatever he might say.*

* The thing might be illustrated by the following apologue:—"Once upon a time, a certain politic congregation of jack-daws had established themselves in the crevices of a village steeple. This steeple was, according to custom, surmounted by the figure of a gilded cock, with a broad fan tail, and placed on a pivot, so that, from whichever quarter the wind blew, he was sure to point in that direction. His fellow-denizens of the steeple, seeing how invariably this cock kept his *neb* to windward, came, foolishly, themselves to imagine, and to teach their young ones, that he possessed some unaccountable power of ruling, or at lea foretelling, the future course of windy events; and they consequently came worship him as a species of deity. It was quite amusing, of a morning, to witn these sage creatures peeping from their holes, with one eye on the clouds, and the other on the image-bird, cawing their observations to one another, ere they would venture upon the shortest flight. In short, this gilded effigy came to govern the community as absolutely as if he had really possessed the power of regulating wind and weather; and as if a jack-daw could not judge of the wind for itself; and when any one, more bold than his neighbours, ventured to say their deity was but a *weathercock*, he was assailed with a cawing chorus, quite sufficient to drown all remonstrances."—*Pilpie's Fables.*

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This personage was peculiarly severe, in his own way, upon Sandy, and such of the family as chose to defend his views. Sometimes Sandy was twitted with the poverty of his early life; at others, with the comparative smallness of his capital in the concern; and again, with the fact that his sons held many situations of trust, in the foreign houses, and elsewhere. Sometimes he was taunted with imitating Patrick, in the practice of demanding cash, or a dissolution of copartnership; and at others he was told he might have his own estate entirely to himself, if he pleased—all the foreign establishments, and correspondents, being appropriated by John, of course! He was told that, with regard to the affair of his signboard, he was "an impostor;" and then that all such matters were stuff and "tomfoolery," too childish to deserve discussion. With regard to the use of John's name, in the way complained of, Master Weathercock professed he was entirely ignorant of any other mode of expression; and when the contract of copartnery, and his own letters, were quoted to him, he sheltered himself under silence, or turned away to some other theme. He even condescended to rake up such old stories, as Sandy's being addicted to playing a particular kind of instrument, called the Macalpine fiddle—and the like. In a word, nothing was too coarse, too silly, or too unfounded, to be used for the occasion.

In this sort of thing, Weathercock had abundance of associates amongst his own brethren. Among the rest was a fellow, who lived by sketching *illustrations*, as they were called, of passing events, and especially copies of the signboards, seals, and so forth, sometimes termed "coats of arms," of persons deceased. He was particularly witty at Sandy's expense, especially in the matter of the signboard, and the figures and mottoes it had borne. But the amusing part of it was, that while the discussion was going on, and this personage was holding Sandy up to ridicule, for his attachment to the old symbols, he himself was discovered actually delivering a course of lectures in the great hall of Master Bull's principal mansion-house, on the value and importance of such signs, seals, flags, and other symbols; devoting, at the same time, great expense to *illustrating* the subject, in his first-rate style! When convicted of this, like his fellow-labourer, he had nothing to say; but he did not possess sufficient candour to mend his manners.

As if John, and his own sons, were not of themselves sufficient, to carry on the contest, they were aided and abetted by others. There was Patrick's son, the *Palmist*, for example. When challenged as already stated, he thought it necessary to make a sort of apology, to the effect that, in using John's name, as sole master of the concern, he had meant no offence to Sandy—or Patrick—or another personage, called *Taffy;* but had omitted the firm, because, John's property being so much the larger, the whole estates had come to be "usually and conveniently" known as his. Acting upon this

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hint, the gentry already referred to, became virtuously indignant in their demand for "Justice to Patrick"—what, it was asked, was to become of that gentleman if Macalpine's name was to be continued in the firm, while poor Paddy was represented by a mere "Co.?" They argued that the only means of securing justice to all parties, was to drop both Sandy and Patrick altogether, and make use of John's individual name alone. They set forth, moreover, the great hardship of being compelled to write, or speak, such a polysyllable as "John, Alexander, & Co." in place of the dissyllable "John Bull," —illustrating their argument by the important remark, that the Bull family had already cut down the words, pronounced by the Macalpines, "Mistress," and "Omnibus," into "Missis," and "Buss," as clearly showing a right to cut and carve, in the same way, in the present instance! Nay, improving upon the Palmist's suggestion, they maintained that several of John's tenants, whose farms happened to be divided from the bulk of the estate, by rather wide *ditches*, had an equal right to complain of their names not being used in the firm, as Sandy had!

It was even hinted—though the fact never was clearly ascertained —that an "opinion," on this subject, had been obtained from a learned legal Professor, who declared that, by what was termed "*common law*," (a thing of shreds and patches, of which John was uncommonly proud) the infliction of a wrong, by any person, on A, was a recognised remedy for a previous wrong, inflicted by the same person, on B—and that in "*Equity*" (by which partnerships were said to be governed), the admission of a third partner, into a company, formerly consisting of two, gave to the one possessed of the largest capital, the right of modifying parties' rights, so as to suit his own views of what was "convenient"—and, consequently, that Master Bull's conduct in the case submitted, was fully justified. It is true that the ratiocination upon which this learned Theban proceeded, was not rested upon any *principle* of equity, or common sense, but chiefly upon certain things termed "Fictions," to which common-law was partial. However, as, by this time, it had come to be practically acknowledged, that the rules guaranteed to Sandy's, should always yield to those established on John's, estate, Common-law, and Equity were supposed to carry the day.

It must be confessed that Patrick O'Shaughnessy, with all his predisposition to perpetrate bulls, did not appear very much to appreciate this novelty, of having his claims vindicated by John— and on such seemingly paradoxical grounds. His associations with the family name "Bull" were not of such a kind as to render him keenly alive to the pleasure of wearing it; and he was, therefore, silent on the subject. But forth came Master Taffy to the rescue, and sent a letter to Weathercock, accusing Sandy of "impudence," and other agreeable peculiarities; and

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saying that, if any one had a right to complain of "neglect," it was he, Taffy—descended, as he was, from a far more ancient family than either of the parties.

The claim to ancient descent could scarcely be disputed—though how it affected the terms of the company's contract was not very apparent. This Taffy, it may be explained, though not very much known by name, is the same person celebrated in the popular rhymes—

> "Taffy was a Welshman, Taffy was a thief;
> Taffy came to my house, and stole a piece of beef;
> I went to Taffy's house, Taffy was'nt at home;
> Taffy came to my house, and stole a marrow bone."

From these lines it would appear as if Taffy had been anything rather than an honest man. But this was just one of these ruses, by which friend John tried to make it appear as if he were the person injured, where the reverse was really the case. The fact is, that Taffy's ancestors, and Sandy's, had been proprietors, originally, of the whole district, latterly forming the two estates. After a good many changes, Taffy had been confined to a small portion of what his father had a right to, which he continued to possess, until John cast his eye upon it—just as he had done with regard to Patrick and Sandy's estates. Having done so, John contrived, without a shadow of justification, actually to dispossess his neighbour of his estate; at the same time reconciling him to the thing, by causing Mrs. Bull to go and lie-in at one of Taffy's mansions, so that John's eldest son might be born on the estate, and be styled "of that Ilk"—a fine piece of legerdemain, truly; but one with which, singularly enough, honest Taffy seemed to be quite pleased. Thereafter, the estates were joined together, under one name, he himself was received into John's establishment, on a small salary, and this was the state of matters when the co-partnership was gone into, between John and his dependants, on the one side, and Alexander, with his dependants, on the other. Sandy, therefore, could not help thinking that Taffy's claim to be placed on the same footing with him, was too good a joke. But, it served the purpose of increasing the clamour—and as that was what was wanted, Taffy's letter was carefully copied out, by Weathercock, and sent all over the country, and to the foreign correspondents of the house.

Against all this, and a great deal more, Sandy might have maintained his cause: he had contended against greater odds in his day. But, unfortunately, not only had he to deal with adversaries without—his worst enemies were within. Some of the most conspicuous and influential of his own children chose to become servile imitators of the young Bulls; as usual, in the case of traitors, going beyond their teachers. Chief among these, was a stalwart youth,

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who made himself conspicuous as a champion of "liberal opinions," and who affected peculiarly to represent the family. By way of challenging acquiescence in these pretensions, this personage assumed his father's name, both for his name and sirname; he was "*The* Macalpine;" and he never appeared without this name emblazoned in the front of his bonnet, which he had always decorated with a huge bunch of the old gentleman's favourite emblem—*the Thistle*. In this guise he was wont to parade himself from one end of the estate to the other; and as he possessed very considerable abilities, combined with a tolerable share of cool impudence, he enjoyed no small influence in the family. Now, this lad, feeling offended, as was alleged, because Sandy had not put him forward as the assertor of his rights, took it upon him to turn round on his father, and become one of his most truculent abusers. No doubt, he of the thistle, with a perverse ingenuity, would always make it appear that *he* was the person who had first pointed out the very grievances of which the family now complained; but, at the same time, would insult and ridicule every one else who ventured to say a word on the subject! According to him, his father was an old fool, and his brothers a parcel of "nobodies." The whole story of the signboard was a piece of unmitigated silliness, and the complaint about the disuse of the firm, no better. He even adopted the notions of the young Bulls, about Patrick, and their other dependants, being Sandy's equals, and as to the demand for "Justice to Patrick."

The amusing part of the thing was, that this parricide, in a small way, would, all the while, *persist* in calling himself by the name and sirname aforesaid, and wearing the emblem already described, as peculiar to his father—being, in fact, one of the most conspicuous emblems of the old vilified signboard. Occasionally, indeed, he was assailed by a call to

"Doff that *lion's* hide,
And hang a *calf*-skin on those recreant limbs!"

But he stuck to the thistle. And, absurd as such conduct was, upon its very face, by dint of impudence, and a skilful play upon the family weakness, already described, all this had the desired effect. Others, anxious to be esteemed as men above *home* prejudices—"superior spirits," capable of relishing a joke, even at their father's expense—or sensible men of business, followed in the same track.

Honourable exceptions there were, no doubt. For example, there was a lad, known by an ancient name of part of the estate, and who was put forward as the accredited advocate of the "vindicators." This lad did not want ability; and he set himself vigorously to combat him of the thistle. But some people fancied he was somewhat too *mercurial* in his disposition, while his surname was apt to suggest the old joke about Sandy and his fiddle. The real secret of his want of success, however, lay in his non-appreciation of the prin-

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ciple at issue; and this was shown in a very remarkable way. Sometimes he would write long epistles, denunciatory of the treatment his father was subjected to—complaining grievously, perhaps, of his old mansions being allowed to go to ruins; while, at the very same time, he would speak of the joint concern as being entirely Master Bull's, using John's name as sole partner, and ignoring the company *firm*, just as ostentatiously as any one of John's own family. It was quite impossible such an advocate could serve his client effectually. He did not understand, or he did not *feel*, his "case." He was a physician, dealing with outward symptoms, and failing to appreciate their cause.

The consequence of this state of matters was, that Sandy was led into the false position of trying to please and conciliate, by a fawning demeanour, in place of boldly and unhesitatingly maintaining his honour, as well as his rights. He occupied himself with an elaborate defence against the charge of seeking a dissolution, in place of treating that charge as an absurdity, in the meantime, intended merely to cast dust in the eyes of himself and others; but as a charge that might *become real*, unless his *just* claims were rationally discussed and attended to. He sought to deprecate the ridicule cast upon his signs, seals, and flags, in place of standing forward, like a man, to repel, or treat with scorn and contempt, the foolish jests of those who could not comprehend how such emblems may be interwoven with a family's better feelings; or who, like Master Bull, pretended to ridicule the emblems of others, while proudly pointing to, honouring, and jealously guarding, their own. Sandy even assumed to undervalue these matters himself, and dwelt upon details of "clerks" and "secretaries," pounds, shillings, and pence, when he should rather have taken as his motto, a passage from John's favourite poet:—

> "Rightly to be great,
> Is not to stir without great argument;
> But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,
> When *honour* is at stake."

He failed to see that, while he was struggling against details, *resulting from his being dealt with as an inferior and subordinate in the house*, he was allowing a sure foundation to be laid for such treatment, in all future time, by permitting his partner's name to be substituted for that of the common firm, solemnly adopted under their contract. There was not a merchant, or petty huckster, in the district, but could have told him this, and yet he failed to see it.

But perhaps the most effectual of all the means adopted, for silencing Sandy's remonstrances, was supplied by the circumstances connected with the threatened bankruptcy of the company's customer and correspondent, *Seignior Abdul*, the Turkey merchant. For the understanding whereof, a short explanation is needful.

Among the customers and correspondents of the house, were this Abdul, and one *Nicholas Bruin*. Opinions were divided,

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as to which of these was the most *profitable* connexion; and there was no denying that this element of profit had come to be the pole-star of Messrs. John, Alexander & Co. Now, Master Bruin had had a great many intricate transactions with Seignior Abdul; and things had got very much complicated betwixt them. The former was a grasping unscrupulous fellow, (very much, indeed, like John himself, in his earlier years) and had contrived to get certain bonds, bills, contracts, and other agreements, giving him great power over Abdul. Their etates had not always marched with each other; Bruin, however, by various means, (though never by fair purchase, but just as John did with Patrick's and Taffy's estates, and tried, in vain, to do so with Sandy's,) had managed to get possession of almost all the intermediate lands, until their boundaries had become awkwardly intermingled. Bruin had long had his eye upon Abdul's establishment, and was known to have avowed his purpose of getting possession of it, wholly or partially, by hook, or by crook.

In these circumstances, he, at the period of which our history treats, set himself, with all his efforts, to get the poor Turkey merchant declared insolvent, with the view of having his estate divided among his real and pretending creditors, in the full confidence that he, Master Bruin, would be able, by means of his bonds and other claims, to secure a large *dividend*. For this purpose, he was urgent with his neighbour to execute a *trust deed* in his own favour; and failing this, he tried every means to get Messrs. John, Alexander & Co., to join in compelling the alleged insolvent to apply for a Sequestration—(*anglice* "a fiat of bankruptcy.") Abdul himself strenuously refused, and our heroes were honest enough, and wise enough, to reject the proposal, although Bruin endeavoured to bribe them by the promise of large *preferences*.

Nicholas Bruin, however, was not a man to be baulked in any scheme he had taken in hand, and so he proceeded forthwith to make a seizure of certain adjacent farms belonging to his neighbour Abdul, under colour of a pretended poinding, (*anglice*, "attachment,") proceeding upon a pretended bond or bill, declaring, however, that he meant to retain these only as what he chose to term a "material guarantee," for performance of obligations due by Seignior Abdul. Thereupon, the latter having brought a *suspension* and *interdict*—or process of *ejectment*—John, Alexander & Co., in conjunction with their friend, Jean Crapeau, agreed to take his part, become surety for him, and fight the question out in the courts of law. Not only so, but, by advice of counsel, actions of trespass and damages were instituted, and the whole causes were "conjoined," and solemnly and deliberately set down for trial—by the appropriate mode of *combat*. The weight of Master Bruin's purse, and his proverbial obstinacy, made this rather a serious matter. Seignior Abdul himself was not very plentiful of funds, and so the sureties had to make up their minds to a somewhat serious inroad on their cash boxes. It came, in fact,

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to be a contest, not merely affecting certain technical legal questions, between the two principal parties; but involving the great issue—whether justice and fair play were to prevail in the mercantile community, or the rich and unscrupulous were henceforth to over-ride the rights of the poorer and less powerful.

Such being the nature of the contest, it naturally engrossed, to a great extent, the interest of the partners of our mercantile house, and of their respective families. It appealed, indeed, peculiarly to the sympathies of our hero, Sandy, who was consequently resolute in his determination to stand by the weaker side. So, taking advantage of this feeling, on his part, and the excitement generally, his opponents in the matter of his grievances, became quite indignant, in their declamation against any attempt to discuss these, while matters of so much greater importance, as they said, were in dependence, everything of the kind being represented as "factious"—as "sowing dissensions"—as "selfishness," and so forth. The whole time and attention of the Boards of management and advice, came, by and by, to be occupied with never-ending discussions about the law-suits between Bruin and Abdul, so that it was quite in vain to ask the members to think of anything else. The fact is, that Sandy was almost as much engrossed as his partners. Those of his sons, who had, at first, taken an interest in the discussion of their father's claims, also began to talk very oracularly about the propriety of "exercising patience"—"waiting for opportunity"—"deferring to the present excitement"—"avoiding offence to John Bull or his family," and the like. Those who spoke thus, pretended to have discovered that the way for Sandy to obtain redress, was by talking smoothly to his partner, appealing to his sense of justice, and abstaining from all allusions to his, Sandy's, former history, that might offend Master Bull's sense of importance—as if that gentleman had ever been known to yield his cherished prejudices to any such gentle inducements!

Some of these advisers were no doubt sincere. But, generally speaking, those who talked in this way, did so merely as a means of escaping from the advocacy of a cause, which had proved less popular, and somewhat more troublesome, than they had expected. Others shrank beneath the dread of a jest; and others, again, had, from association with John and his family, become really altogether indifferent about their father's estate and affairs. The result of all this naturally came to be, that Sandy's complaints were gradually thrust out of sight. The great law-suit, *Bruin versus Abdul, et e. con.*, dragged its slow length along. Besides the costs, provided for in the regular way, voluntary subscriptions were resorted to, when our hero certainly came forward in the most liberal manner, putting his partner entirely to shame; but this was only pointed out as an evidence that his complaints had been groundless.

Nothing, meantime, was to be heard but constant talk about the

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generous conduct of Master Bull and Mons. Crapeau, in their defence of the Turkey merchant. John Bull's courage—his liberality—the extent of his resources—his devotion to the cause of honesty and fair play, were in everybody's mouth. Sandy was too insignificant a person to deserve being named; and if ever the company firm, even, was heard of, this was only when it required to be subscribed to a bill, or a cheque on the bank, which unfortunately was, as yet, a necessary formality, by the letter of the contract. And not only was this the case with John himself, and his dependants; it became quite customary on Sandy's own estate. In their correspondence, and even in their conversations amongst themselves, the Macalpines—those who were fools, those who were toadies, and those who were indifferent—condescended to write and speak, habitually, of the manager, the Boards, the clerks, and, everything else, as Master Bull's; and of the whole assistance lent in the law-suit, with Bruin the obnoxious, as John's, and John's alone. *No wonder, then, that strangers followed the same practice.*

As our object, at present, is not to write a detailed history of the great law-suit, we may briefly say that it was finally settled, favourably for the Turkey merchant. His estate was saved from the bankruptcy court; and Master Bruin mulcted in heavy damages. Of course, this was the subject of vast rejoicing, and congratulation, and loud were the praises bestowed on John Bull for his conduct in the affair. If he was self-conceited, and opinionative before, he now became doubly so. He and Mons. Crapeau were, according to their own accounts, the greatest personages, not merely in the district, but in the wide world. Nothing would serve John but he must have a medal struck for the occasion. On the one side thereof, was the figure of John himself, as formerly described; and, on the reverse, a Bear, while attempting to worry a Turkey, attacked by a Bull; a Cock standing by in the act of *crowing*. Not satisfied with this, John set himself, farther, to get an addition made to the Company's official seal, commemorative of *his* exploits in the great law-suit. This consisted of a *Bear's head coupé*, with the motto "*Ego Feci.*" The difficulty, at first, was to find a place, or "stall" for this design, the seal being already full; but this was eventually got over, by taking possession of that portion heretofore devoted to Sandy's peculiar emblems. Ill-natured people would recall John's remarks about "stuff" and "tom-foolery," and say he was very inconsistent. But the duty of the historian is to chronicle events, not to reconcile human inconsistencies. As for Sandy, and Patrick, who had both been active, as usual, in the whole affair, why, they were never heard of. The result was, that now, when the hurly-burly was done, Sandy was farther than ever from the recognition of his partnership rights; and when he sought to resume the subject, the proposal was received with a degree of contempt altogether annihilating—in short,

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he had lost his opportunity. Gradually therefore he continued to sink from the position of a partner, with equal rights, to that of a mere dependant, out of whom as much labour was to be extracted, for as small a compensation, as possible.

Alexander Macalpine was at length taught, by bitter practical lessons, that there had been something in the protest against the disuse of the company firm. He learnt, by experience, that the greatest loss a man can possibly sustain, is the loss of his position in society; that all other losses may be retrieved—this one never.

It would be a painful task for the historian to enter into all the details of that experience; and, indeed, such details are not needed, for history's great object, of teaching by example. One specimen, and the crowning one in Sandy's own estimation, may suffice.

It will be in the recollection of our readers, that while John and Alexander were, as yet, bitter rivals, there had been a constant and long subsisting friendship, and business connexion, between the latter and Mons. Crapeau. The partnership with John had broken off this, and mixed up Sandy with all the misunderstandings, betwixt his new partner, and his old associate. Well, one consequence of the great suit with Nicholas Bruin naturally was, that, in place of enemies and rivals, Bull and Crapeau became, for a time, sworn brothers. Nothing, indeed, could exceed the apparent cordiality that sprung up between them. Some people were, indeed, disposed to think that too great a fuss was made, and too much anticipated from the change; but really it was so agreeable, as compared with former bickerings, that it would have been invidious to cavil at it. Seeing this, and calling to mind their old intimacy, our hero, Alexander, by and by, took it into his head to send over his youngest and favourite son, and manager of the *Saint Mungo* Factory, to Mons. Crapeau's establishment, on a visit of congratulation, making him the bearer of sundry kind messages, about former days, when Sandy himself had been so often an honoured guest with his neighbour. He, naturally enough, imagined that the youth would be received with great attention and eclat. His astonishment and indignation may therefore be imagined, at receiving a letter, reporting that, Mons. Crapeau himself being absent, his servants professed to be entirely ignorant of the existence of the writer's father, and could not even be made to understand about his connexion with the firm; that they understood the estates and establishment, on the other side of the water, were Mr. Bull's, and could recognise no one else. What made this communication doubly pungent was the innocent remark that, in the meantime, young Macalpine had been received into the apartments of the upper servants, and treated very kindly by the butler, until he should write home for more satisfactory credentials. What a downfall this, from the time when Sandy himself usually occupied the most distinguished seat at his neighbour's board!

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A spark of the ancient spirit flashed up, for a time, as old Macalpine perused this unexpected epistle; and, acting upon the spur of the moment, he formed the resolution of at once proceeding personally to *Monsieur's* mansion, and requiring some kind of explanation. So, as such a journey required funds, he opened his desk and drew a cheque upon the company's bankers, which was subscribed, in unusually large text, "JOHN, ALEXANDER, & Co.," and despatched by a clerk, while he himself proceeded with his preparations. The young man was somewhat tardy in returning, but when he did so, his delay was sufficiently explained by the missive of which he was the bearer. We are fortunately enabled to give the document entire, with the exception of the year :—

"EXCHEQUER BUILDINGS,
"1*st April*, ——.

"MR. ALEXR. MACALPINE,
&c., &c.,

"DR. SIR,—We regret the necessity for returning your cheque, being at present without funds. In explanation, we may mention that the balance, per pass-book, was drawn out yesterday, by Mr. Bull, for the purpose, as he said, of settling the purchase of the *Park* and *Gardens*, lately bought by him (on Coy.'s credit) for the recreation of his domestic servants and visitors. Since we are writing at any rate, allow us to remark upon the inconvenience our clerks experience, through the want of uniformity in the subscription of business documents passed upon our house—Mr. Bull being now in the regular habit of using his own name, we suggest you should also adopt it; and, to keep matters in proper shape, perhaps you would procure, and lodge with us, his letter of procuration authorizing you to that effect.—We remain, Dr. Sir, yours, &c.,

"(Signed,) CORNWAL LEWIS & COY.

"(Private.)"

If Sandy was indignant before, he was now perfectly confounded. "I was wont to believe (he muttered) those fools who told me there was nothing in a name, but I now see plainly the 'insidious system,' by which I was warned, my position would be undermined. But I will no longer submit to be treated so, if I should have a dissolution, and *a Gazette notice of it*, to the bargain. Let me hear, however, what my lawyer sons say to all this."

So saying, he set off to consult one or other of his sons, learned in he law, whom he knew he should find, as usual, stalking up and down the hall of the old house, where the *Board* was wont to meet, in the days when he was a single, poor, but independent man. The locality was not calculated to sooth the feelings which now thronged his bosom, and gleamed in his grey eye; and whenever the young Macalpines saw him, they perceived there was something unusual amiss. Indulging, however, in the levity of manner, which he fancied belonged to his superior learning, and polite associations, and using the bastard tone, and dialect, acquired by imitating the Bulls—one of them exclaimed, "Well, old fellah! what's i' the wind now? Any bad news of Benjamin, eh? Or—surely you ain't at your old unes again?" I don't require to be told (answered the old gentleman)

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what is the leaning of your fraternity, in regard to such matters; but I am come merely to consult you professionally—Read these, Sir, (producing young Sandy's letter and the bankers's note,) and tell me what, if any, redress I can have for such treatment."

The person so addressed, seeing his father was not in a mood to tolerate his affectations, settled his gown and wig properly, and set himself to a perusal of the documents; which, having finished, he asked what *legal* point was thereby raised, requiring his advice. Sandy thereupon referred to the terms of his contract, the many violations thereof in times past, and the entire subversion of its spirit, indicated by what had just occurred, and wished to know whether, in a court of law, or of equity, he could enforce the observance of the first and leading article, because, if he could do that, he thought he might still hope to bring about a better observance of the others. The lawyer, thus pressed, replied that "much might be said on both sides;" but he was afraid of a plea or of "desuetude," "acquiescence," or "homologation;" something also he said about "positive and negative prescriptions;" and concluded that it was a "doubtful case." "But," added he, with the manner of one accustomed to give advice, and be paid for it, "this contract of yours is, in fact, a regular nuisance; and my advice to you is, to go home, and put it in the fire. It is just your pertinacity about it that has always kept up an unpleasant feeling between you and Mr. Bull; and if you would, good humouredly, acquiesce in being placed upon a salary, like your friend Taffy, there, I am sure John would deal with you far more handsomely than he ever has done, in your character of a partner. Really, after all, what does it signify? It is a mere dispute about equality, precedency, and what not; as to which, I am quite sure, none of your family care a pin's point, provided they can be made members of Board, secretaries, advocates, shipmasters—and *Judges*. These are the real objects for which men contend now-a-days."*

Here, then, was a proper finale to Sandy's "case" for the lawyer! What could he say to such conclusive logic? All he did venture was the indignant sentence, uttered in his old vernacular—"Ye misbegotten Loon! the spot whar ye staun—the vera *name* o' this hoose, shud hae taught ye different sentiments. I had ance a son wha wore that goun, and wad hae acted differently. But I see hoo it is. Gude by, Sir. This Ha' was ance before shut up, on a memorable occasion; ye may aiblins live to see it shut again. When that time comes, remember ye my words."

After this conversation, Sandy was not much seen or heard of in public, for a time. When he did appear, it was with a subdued demeanour, that contrasted wofully with what he had

* Long afterwards, the correspondence thus laid before the Lawyer, was found carefully put up along with Sandy's *Will*, and endorsed, in his own handwriting, thus—"See Job xix. 14; Ecclesiastes ii. 11." The reference was peculiarly significant.

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once been. The views propounded by his son, the lawyer, with concurrence of his legal brethren, having become known, John no longer hesitated about adopting whatever changes or innovations he felt inclined to. The rules for the guidance of Sandy's establishment were gradually abolished; and it was not long until the hall referred to was once again, and finally, shut up. His cherished notions about the management of his *kirk* were very soon turned upside down. The designation of his estate was entirely changed. Many of his sons became proud to assume the name of "Bull," and eager to deny their parentage. The old signboard, and ships' flags, were carefully put out of sight, while John's flaunted openly in their place. The great commercial and manufacturing business, it is true, continued to go on prosperously, as regards the realizing of profits; but these were disposed of as John thought proper. Sandy, it is true, received his "allowance;" did eat well, and drink well, and had a carriage at command. But he was a mere cipher, where once he had been honoured and obeyed. The man's status and name as a merchant; his moral, intellectual, and social influence, were extinct. Those who had known him in other days, shook their heads when he passed by; and wise men pointed him out as a warning to their sons.

As for John, having thus got rid of the Mordecai who sat at the king's gate, in the shape of one who claimed to be his equal, and had a right to do so, he became quite jovial and good-humoured, and often invited Sandy, and members of his family, up to dine in the butler's hall. And even this Sandy became accustomed to, in course of time.

As for Patrick, he throve tolerably well; but always contrived, by the old system of clamour, not only to retain all the rents and profits of his own estate, but now and then to secure a handsome sum out of the company's purse. To this John did not very strenuously object, because Patrick, however much he had been ill used, was, after all, a sort of *protegé*.

And now, as we object, in all cases, whether of real or fictitious history, to any thing in the shape of formal *moral*, we must leave our readers to deduce for themselves the moral of this "true history." If they cannot do so, then it has been written in vain.

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